

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2020

INTERFAITH
Caregivers
GREATER MERIER COUNTY

Our mission is to promote the independence, dignity, and wellness of homebound elderly and people with disabilities by matching them with supportive and caring volunteers who assist with the tasks of everyday life.

Learn to Build Strong Bones While at Home

How are you staying healthy and fit while being home?

Our *Project Healthy Bones* (PHB) participants keep their bones healthy and strong by attending our new virtual exercise classes via Zoom! Interfaith Caregiver's PHB classes have gone virtual due to the challenges presented by COVID-19 and the temporary closure of our hosting facilities.

Project Healthy Bones has temporarily gone virtual due to COVID-19 and our weekly meeting is not in-person. The virtual meetings continue to help seniors at risk of osteoporosis learn the benefits of exercise, nutrition, safety, and healthy lifestyle factors.



Project Healthy Bones was founded in 1997 and is based on a senior exercise model from Tufts University. Currently, the program is offered only in the state of New Jersey, with more than 100 classes, although at this time only a few are virtual. The purpose of *Project Healthy Bones* is to prevent and reduce falls, improve balance, and increase socialization amongst participants. During the program, participants learn the benefits of exercise, nutrition, safety, and healthy lifestyle tips. Each PHB class is taught by a trained Lead Coordinator or Peer Leader and lasts about an hour and a half.

Starting in June, every Monday at 10 am, many of our participants joined us once again, happy to see each other while exercising in the comfort of their own homes. Between PHB exercises, there are 30-second breaks to take a drink of water (staying hydrated is essential) or to hear quick but insightful health education tips. At this time, our virtual Zoom classes are available only for current participants. We are working to offer classes to new participants in the fall. Efforts to add a second weekly class and bring back our guest wellness speakers are also in process.

If you would like more information or to sign-up for future classes, you can contact, Evita Girón, PHB Program Coordinator or Lauri Harbison, PHB Coordinator Assistant at evita@icgmc.org or lauri@icgmc.org.

ICGMC OFFICE REMOTE TEAM

With COVID-19 safety protocols closing many businesses, we have been proud to remain fully staffed during these challenging months. Our team began working remotely in March, with our administrative staff rotating limited on-site hours. Our program staff continues to remotely answer live telephone calls forwarded from the ICGMC office. This protocol has allowed us to respond to the needs and issues as they emerge and lets our care receivers and volunteers know that they remain our top priority.

from the desk of

Linda Gyimoty, MA
Executive Director

Dear Friends,

Recently I have been adding two phrases to nearly every email or conversation... "I HATE this virus!" and "Why won't this virus just go away already?"

From the laughs and sympathetic emojis and returning comments I know that I am articulating what we are all feeling. Not just here in Mercer County, or in the US, but around the world.

Not only are we mourning for the 170,000+ Americans who have died from COVID-19 already, but we are grieving the loss of time spent with friends and family, the loss of hugs and kisses from our little ones and our elderly. And I think every day we struggle with the fear of illness, for ourselves and our loved ones, and the desperate wish for NORMAL.

2020 has so far been unbelievably, ridiculously, and impossibly difficult.

There may not be a silver lining...but there are some good things that we can take comfort from.

First, we have amazing health care professionals and medical scientists in this country working around the clock to help us all. I take comfort and direction from their efforts to keep us all safe in this evolving and sustained crisis. We have used health data and medical science to mobilize large changes in social distancing and safety protocols in our work. It has been difficult to work within these limits, but I believe that these restrictions have kept us safer as well.

And we also have each other! Here within our ICGMC family that means our board, staff, volunteers, faith leaders, donors, partners, government friends, and our care receivers and wellness participants. We can still take joy in the every day things that we do in common purpose to make our world a little brighter, our loads a little lighter, and to bring hope and love to those we serve. They need us more than ever!

And we have - laughter and love, kindness and friendship, patience and creativity. Each month we still have about 150 volunteers armed with these tools who are finding creative ways to serve, from visits through a door and outside face mask conversations, to careful food delivery activities, virtual wellness classes, and endless virtual visits and calls that keep our ICGMC family connected and cared for. And we have another 80-100 folks ready to jump back into service as soon as their personal risk factors allow. This isn't just good news, it's amazing news! It's hopeful news!

Now we just need the virus to go away!

Stay Safe! Stay Healthy!

Linda Gyimoty
Executive Director

linda@icgmc.org

“*What ICGMC Care Receivers are Talking About*

I do not have many friends and family in this area - the kindness, conversation with both my caregivers made me feel like someone cares.

SPECIAL THANKS

Please allow me to personally recognize our amazing ICGMC staff. Each member of our team has continued to work so hard every day, often doing extra hours and shifts to help manage these changing times, and support all of you and our care receivers. I am so proud of our team and know that their dedication is an expression of their love for our mission, affection for all of you, and compassion for our care receivers.

Please let me also thank our leadership volunteers, including our generous Board members, as well as our smart and creative group leaders and PHB Peer Leaders and Coordinators. You have all helped to ensure that we provide the strongest, safest programs and services possible. This has included helping us to identify and craft new solutions that meet a wider range of needs, with constantly changing and often decreasing resources and options. I am so proud to work with each of you, and know that the future of our organization remains safe in your hands, and in your hearts!

MAKE A DIFFERENCE VOLUNTEER At ICGMC

BE KIND TO YOUR MIND

Tips to Cope with Stress During COVID-19

1. **PAUSE** Breathe. Notice how you feel
2. **TAKE BREAKS** from COVID-19 content
3. **MAKE TIME** to sleep and exercise
4. **REACH OUT** and stay connected
5. **SEEK HELP** if overwhelmed or unsafe

How to Reduce Stress During COVID-19

- Know what to do if you are sick and are concerned about COVID-19. Contact a health professional before you start any self-treatment for COVID-19.
- Know where and how to get treatment and other support services and resources, including counseling or therapy (in person or through telehealth services).
- Take care of your emotional health. Taking care of your emotional health will help you think clearly and react to the urgent needs to protect yourself and your family.
- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including those on social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
 - Take care of your body.
 - Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate
 - Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals.
 - Exercise regularly.
 - Get plenty of sleep.
 - Avoid excessive alcohol use and drugs.
- Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- Connect with others. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
- Connect with your community- or faith-based organizations. While social distancing measures are in place, consider connecting online, through social media, or by phone or mail.



VOLUNTEER PHOTO CHALLENGE

ICGMC is looking for fun, unique, and special photos of you, showing how COVID-19 restrictions have changed the way you volunteer and interact with your care receivers. It can be a photo of you dropping off groceries, visiting outside, or maybe you're making a friendly phone call - be sure if you are together, the photo shows safe social distancing practices, and a face mask covering your mouth and nose. This could be a fun interactive activity for both you and your care receiver.

It's easy to get started!

- It can be as simple as you taking a "selfie" photo of you completing a volunteer activity for ICGMC.
- If you plan to take a photo with or of your care receiver, please remember to ask them for their permission to join in the photo challenge.
- Fill out and sign the Media Release, one for you and your care receiver, if applicable. [Download form here.](#)
- Snap a fun picture on your cell phone or camera.
- Email the photo and Media Release forms to Linda@icgmc.org.

We will post your photo on Social Media and maybe even use them in future publications. You could be famous!

Send your photos and Media Release Forms to Linda@icgmc.org.

Content source: National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases

REMEMBER: YOU ARE NOT ALONE

Crisis Text Line: Text "NJ" to 741741
Family Helpline: 1-800-843-5437
Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-572-7233
Mental Health Hotline: 1-866-202-4357

Sexual Violence Hotline: 1-800-601-7200
Elderly Care Locator: 1-800-677-1116
Veteran's Crises Line: 1-800-677-1116
NJ Suicide Hopeline: 1-855-654-6735

Volunteer Service Limits and Reminders!

What this **STILL** means for NOW!

- Please re-assess your current health status, risk factors for yourself and your household, and personal comfort level for participation in any volunteer activities. Some of our volunteers have placed their ICGMC service activities on hold or have shifted to friendly calls or other phone support activities. We understand and respect these decisions! We also hope that you can return to full service once safety factors improve for you and/or your family. If your volunteer status has changed – either way - please let us know.
- Keep washing your hands and/or sanitizing your hands before and after any task that you may do for/or with our care receivers.
- During your volunteer service activities please continue to wear facemasks in public and during any in-person contact with/or for your care receiver. Including food shopping, with door drop-off.
- Food shopping remains FOR the care receiver, not with them.
- Continue to restrict your care giving activities to outside of the home of your care receiver. Replace friendly visits with friendly calls/virtual visits. If visiting outside, remember to maintain six feet of distance AND have both of you, and anyone else at the home, wear a facemask during all interactions.
- Essential protections during doctor visits/transportation must continue to include:

1. **New** – if you have been in recent (within the last two weeks) in-person contact with anyone who tested positive for COVID-19 or traveled/had a visit from anyone from a state with high incidence of COVID-19, without using full safe distancing and masks, even if you don't have symptoms, please wait at least two weeks to do services or wait to be cleared by testing.
So much of this virus is transmitted without someone having symptoms that we ask you to be extra cautious in protecting you and our care receivers.
2. **If you are sick - (even if it's not COVID-19 related symptoms) or may have been recently exposed to the virus** – please stay home and communicate with the group leaders or staff so we can try to create other transportation alternatives for the care receiver.
3. **If you are well** - confirm with the care receiver that they are not currently sick on the day of the visit/transport and have not recently been exposed to the virus. Share with the care receiver your positive health status.

ICGMC caregivers and care receivers maintain COVID-19 safety measures while continuing to provide vital volunteer services.



4. **Have windows in vehicle open** - weather permitting.
5. **All must wear facemasks** during the transport and any interaction.
6. **Hand washing/sanitizing** before and after the activity.
7. Suggest that the **care receiver be in the back seat** – for additional distancing.
8. **Volunteers should not go into the doctor's office** to wait for the care receiver, as others in the waiting rooms could pose virus transmission or other health risks.
9. **Limit transportation activities** to the most essential trips/visits.

- Household chores – should continue to be limited to outside and drop-off activities. Any critical in-home chore assistance must include full distancing, hand sanitizing, gloves, and face masks.
- Project Healthy Bones – on-site classes remain cancelled, but virtual classes have begun. Consider returning our joining these fun classes from home.
- Group Meetings, PHB Leadership Meetings & Workshops for Volunteers. These meetings continue to be conference call or virtual through Zoom meeting resources, and we are making efforts to add some wellness/skills trainings for all to attend – safely. If you need help with how to join these meetings, call our staff and they will be glad to help you get started.
- New/Prospective Volunteer Trainings – held virtually, monthly with additional days/times offered. Some of these newly trained volunteers are already in service, and some are set to join us as soon as restrictions lift.

Call the office at 609-393-9922 or speak to your group leaders if you have any questions or need to resolve any special circumstances that you or your care receiver may have.

With Gratitude

COVID-19 Special Donors

We gratefully acknowledge the following gifts and grants of \$250 or more, received since January 2020, which enable us to provide services to our care receivers.

The Allergan Foundation	Paul and Susan Jellinek
Jane and Ed Brown	Lawrence Township
Lisa Carmalt	Community Foundation
Church and Dwight Co., Inc.	Lillian Pitkin Schenck Foundation
Sally and Christopher Fullman Fund	Joyce Myers
Galaxy Glass Corporation	Raymond Niedzwicz
Charles Garlisi	Andrew O'Rahilly
Glen Eagle Advisors, LLC –	Pearson Memorial United
Kathy and Anthony Lo Bue	Methodist Church Members
John Grimaldi	Kathryn Sikorski
Linda Gyimoty	Jeffrey and Deborah Silver
Lauri & Christopher Harbison	Rick and Dawn van den Heuvel
Henry E. Niles Foundation	United Way of Greater Mercer County

Interfaith Caregivers of Greater Mercer County would like to provide special recognition to grants and donations specifically provided to organization manage the unexpected needs and challenges during this pandemic.

The Allergan Foundation

United Way of Greater Mercer County
The Sally and Christopher
Fullman Fund
Lawrence Township
Community Foundation

Neighbors
Helping
Neighbors

IN LOVING
Memory

Accomplishments During the Crisis

Please join us as we recognize those within our ICGMC family, care receivers and friends that we lost since January. May their loved ones take comfort from knowing that they will continue to live in our memories and our hearts.

As everyone knows, the COVID-19 pandemic caused significant changes in safety protocols and social distancing requirements across the country and around the world starting in March. Despite these restrictions, ICGMC continued to operate modified care giving services throughout this time to meet the most essential needs of our homebound elderly and disabled neighbors – transportation for medical appointments, food shopping and friendly/virtual visiting and calls. I am proud to say that throughout these six months, our NHN program still had an average of 150 active volunteers each month, providing about 800 hours of service to 150+ care receivers in need, with many more volunteers waiting to serve once personal and familial safety limits are resolved.

Ivy Allison	Verlyn Heyward	Rose Salvatore
Larry Arcioni	Dolores Higham	Eleanor Sharp
Leila Blitzer	Beatrice Jetter	Mary Sienkiewicz
John Carr	George Jones	James Smith
Margaret Carucci	Marge Kibler	James William Smith, Jr.
Gordon Cook	Nick Malzone	Annie Taylor
Dorothy Federkiewicz	Laura Oberding	Matilde Tucubal
Dorothea Gervasio	Sondra Obstein	Josephine White
Ron Gittleman	Richard Panicaro	Rose M. Zuccarello
Lee Gregory	Yolanda Parrotta	

Our team would like to provide a special memorial recognition for George Jones. George was a strong and tireless volunteer leader through our St. Gregory the Great Parish and serving within our Project Healthy Bones program. His passing this year has been felt by our entire team and the seniors that he served. We wish to extend our prayers and comfort to his family during this difficult time and hope that they all know how special he was to so many.

WHAT'S NEW

We are pleased to welcome two new consultants on board.

Please meet Kathy Moncur, Marketing and Communications Consultant. She joined ICGMC with several years of experience developing and implementing marketing campaigns for business-to-business organizations in the greater Philadelphia area. Her experience ranges from designing digital assets to monitoring performance analytics. Kathy is eager to share her marketing experience to help increase ICGMC's visibility. In her free time, she enjoys amateur photography, painting, and travel.



Kathy Moncur
Marketing Consultant

Also recently joining ICGMC professional staff is Urszula Filipek. She is a Web Design Consultant with over ten years of web design and development experience. Urszula, since 2012, has volunteered with ICGMC as a member of St. Gregory the Great Church. She is excited to use her creativity to promote ICGMC services and programs as well as to inspire volunteers to support our agency's mission and help their neighbors in need. She saw our job posting and told Linda that "our website could use some help." We agree! Urszula is working hard on a complete update of our website and improving the accessibility for users on all devices. Look for our new website to be launched soon.



Urszula Filipek
Web Design Consultant

• • • • •

Stay in Touch

We are continuing to use electronic communications channels more and more to keep you informed about events and activities. These avenues are more cost-effective and timely than regular mail. Here are some simple steps you can take to make sure we stay in touch:

EMAIL:



- **Notify** ICGMC of changes to your email address
- **Check** your Spam box for ICGMC messages
- **Open** and **read** email messages from ICGMC

Learn more: icgmc.org/volunteer

FACEBOOK:



We post up-to-date information on events and useful information on our Facebook page. We invite you to follow us on Facebook, and to serve as an ambassador for our mission by responding to our posts and sharing them.

- **Follow** us at facebook.com/icgmc
- **Like, Comment On** and **Share** our posts, photos, and events.
- Indicate that you are **Interested** in our events

What ICGMC Care Receivers are Talking About

“ I like talking about sports and our service as veterans with my caregiver, I can't get that type of conversation with others. ”

Stay Tuned Possible Virtual Event Fall 2020



**INTERFAITH
Caregivers**
GREATER MERJER COUNTY

STAFF

Linda Gyimoty	Executive Director
Urszula Filipek	Website Consultant
Kathy Moncur	Marketing Consultant
Nancy Myers.....	Administrative Manager
Janet Zito	Finance Manager
Evita Giron	PHB Coordinator
Lauri Harbison	PHB Assistant
Denise Manheimer RN, BSN,.....	Case Manager
Brigitte Palumbo RN	Case Manager
Cheryl Polo	RSVP Director
Nancy Remer, RN, BSN.....	Nurse Case Manager
Dorothy Richardson.....	Volunteer Manager

Shining Lights Gala

On October 19, 2019, we held our Shining Lights Gala and celebrated the men and women who helped ICGMC reach our 25th Anniversary. Attendees enjoyed the wonderful keynote speaker, and three individuals and organizations were honored, including: **Jane Latini**, Past Executive Director, the **NJM Insurance Group**, and the five Catholic Churches that comprise the Lumen Christi Cohort 6 including the **Church of St. Gregory the Great**, **Our Lady of Sorrows - St. Anthony's Parish**, **St. John the Baptist Roman Catholic Church**, **St. Raphael - Holy Angels Parish**, and **St. Vincent de Paul Parish**.

We also celebrated all the leaders, donors, volunteers, congregations, and staff who brought us to this important milestone. Thank you to all the shining lights in our ICGMC family who embrace our mission and serve hundreds of elderly and adults with disabilities in our community each year.



Cathy Sikorski Gala keynote speaker



Honorees from the Lumen Christi Cohort 6 and ICGMC Executive Director, Linda Gyimoty



Honorees Patricia Hartpence and the team from NJM Insurance Group



Honoree Jane Latini, former ICGMC Executive Director, and her family



2019 ICGMC Board of Trustees

A logo for the 25th Anniversary of Interfaith Caregivers Greater Mercer County. The logo features a circular emblem with "25TH ANNIVERSARY" inside, surrounded by a laurel wreath. To the right, the text reads "INTERFAITH Caregivers GREATER MERCER COUNTY" and "Serving the community since 1994".

View the ICGMC 25th Anniversary Video at <https://youtu.be/IONKg7aWxyw>

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Rosemary Durkin, Esq., Chair
Elizabeth Solan, BSN, MPH, Vice Chair
Michelle Robb, CPA, Treasurer
Maureen Cozzi, Secretary

MEMBERS

Loretta R. Kuhnert
Stephen Lucas
Frank Mattozzi
Robert F. Morris, Esq.
Adrienne Rossi
Mary L. Singletary

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Linda Gyimoty, MA

ADVISORY BOARD

Rev. Darrell L. Armstrong
Ann M. Cannon
Rosemary C. Frascella, M.D.
Paul Jellinek
Rev. René Rory John
Kathy Anne Lo Bue
JoAnne San Paolo, RN, BSN, MSN

STUCK AT HOME WITH ON-LINE ORDERING?

Support us while you shop!

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice. Every item available for purchase on www.amazon.com is also available on AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com) at the same price.

How do I shop at AmazonSmile?

- 1: Go to smile.amazon.com on your web browser or activate AmazonSmile on your Amazon Shopping app. (When you're using the app, always check for the "AmazonSmile" logo to ensure you're activated for AmazonSmile.)
- 2: Sign in with your same Amazon.com username and password. (Your shopping cart, Wish List, wedding or baby registry, and other account settings are also the same.)
- 3: On your first visit to smile.amazon.com, you need to select "Interfaith Caregivers" to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. The site will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make through AmazonSmile will result in a donation.